

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

105th Congress
2nd Session

Vote No. 288

September 25, 1998, 9:33 a.m.
Page S-10948 Temp. Record

FAA REAUTHORIZATION/Final Passage

SUBJECT: Wendell Ford National Air Transportation System Improvement Act . . . H.R. 4057. Final passage, as amended.

ACTION: BILL PASSED, 92-1

SYNOPSIS: As passed, H.R. 4057, the Wendell Ford National Air Transportation System Improvement Act, will reauthorize most programs of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for 2 years and will provide funding for aviation safety and security improvements. It will also add slot exemptions at major airports in New York, Chicago, and Washington and will enact limited exemptions to the perimeter rule. Details are provided below.

- Most FAA programs will be reauthorized for 2 years (as reported, they would have been reauthorized for 4 years), including the Airport Improvement Program (AIP). If the bill is not enacted by September 30, 1998, airports will not receive their Federal grants under the AIP. New airport security measures will also be authorized.
- Amendments to the AIP include that small airports will be given greater flexibility in their local matching share ratio, and the set-aside for noise abatement from the discretionary fund will be increased from the current 31 percent to 35 percent.
- Slot exemptions will be provided for nonstop regional jets to fly to and from underserved communities and slot-controlled airports (Reagan National, LaGuardia, Kennedy, and O'Hare; "slots" refer to takeoffs and landings at an airport).
- Slot exemptions for nonstop regional jet or service between a nonhub airport, a small hub, or a medium hub airport and O'Hare, LaGuardia, and Kennedy airports will be subject to Transportation Department approval.
- At Reagan National Airport, the Transportation Department will grant limited exemptions to the perimeter rule by distributing 12 newly created slot exemptions for long-haul flights beyond the perimeter (perimeter rules limit the length of nonstop flights to and from airports; perimeter rules vary by airport). Also, 12 newly created slot exemptions will be granted for air service to small and medium-sized communities within Reagan National's perimeter. Carriers will only be allowed to use "Stage-3" aircraft, which meet strict noise limitation requirements, for any of these new flights at Reagan National. Measures to assess noise levels and to abate noise at the airport will be authorized.

(See other side)

YEAS (92)				NAYS (1)		NOT VOTING (7)	
Republican (53 or 100%)		Democrats (39 or 98%)		Republicans (0 or 0%)	Democrats (1 or 3%)	Republicans (2)	Democrats (5)
Abraham	Hutchinson	Akaka	Johnson		Robb	Ashcroft- ^{2AY}	Boxer- ²
Allard	Hutchison	Baucus	Kennedy			Kempthorne- ²	Glenn- ²
Bennett	Inhofe	Biden	Kerrey				Hollings- ²
Bond	Jeffords	Bingaman	Kerry				Moseley-Braun- ²
Brownback	Kyl	Breaux	Kohl				Wellstone- ^{2AY}
Burns	Lott	Bryan	Landrieu				
Campbell	Lugar	Bumpers	Lautenberg				
Chafee	Mack	Byrd	Leahy				
Coats	McCain	Cleland	Levin				
Cochran	McConnell	Conrad	Lieberman				
Collins	Murkowski	Daschle	Mikulski				
Coverdell	Nickles	Dodd	Moynihan				
Craig	Roberts	Dorgan	Murray				
D'Amato	Roth	Durbin	Reed				
DeWine	Santorum	Feingold	Reid				
Domenici	Sessions	Feinstein	Rockefeller				
Enzi	Shelby	Ford	Sarbanes				
Faircloth	Smith, Bob	Graham	Torricelli				
Frist	Smith, Gordon	Harkin	Wyden				
Gorton	Snowe	Inouye					
Gramm	Specter						
Grams	Stevens						
Grassley	Thomas						
Gregg	Thompson						
Hagel	Thurmond						
Hatch	Warner						
Helms							

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

- 1—Official Business
- 2—Necessarily Absent
- 3—Illness
- 4—Other

SYMBOLS:

- AY—Announced Yea
- AN—Announced Nay
- PY—Paired Yea
- PN—Paired Nay

- 30 new slot exemptions will be created at Chicago-O'Hare Airport over the next 3 years, provided that certain noise and safety certifications are first made.
- A 4-year pilot program will be authorized to help small communities attract improved air service; participating communities will be selected from all regions of the country.
- A 4-year pilot program will be authorized to broaden Federal contract tower program eligibility by allowing Federal-local cost sharing partnerships at certain airports that do not meet the required cost-benefit ratio.
- New restrictions will be placed on overflights of national parks by air tour operators.
- The cap on the amount of unexpended funds at the end of a fiscal year that may be spent on noise abatement will be lifted.
- It is the sense of the Senate that the United States should enforce its rights under the air service agreement known as the "Bermuda II Agreement."
- The Death on the High Seas Act will be amended to permit non-pecuniary damage awards of up to \$750,000 for deaths caused during commercial aviation.
- Criminal penalties will be established for pilots operating in air transportation without an airman's certificate.
- As soon as practicable and annually thereafter, the Treasury Department will report on the amount of taxes collected in each State in the preceding year for the Airport and Airway Trust Fund; also, an annual report will be made on each State's dollar contribution to the Airport and Airway Trust Fund and the amount of funds each State received from that fund.
- If a major air carrier at a major hub airport has an interline or interconnection agreement with another carrier at that airport and a third carrier seeks such an agreement, that third carrier will have to be offered similar terms and conditions on a non-discriminatory basis (this provision will facilitate the emergence of regional carriers).

Those favoring final passage contended:

We are very pleased that a strong bipartisan consensus has been reached on this bill before the September 30 deadline for cutting off AIP funds. Passage of this bill is needed before approximately \$10 billion in funds per year may be released. Key provisions include measures to improve safety and security at airports, measures to increase competition, particularly in underserved areas, and provisions to limit overflights of national parks. Many regional interests had to be balanced in putting this bill together, and compromises had to be made. The end result is a bill that we are certain has broad support. We urge our colleagues to vote in favor of final passage.

Those opposing final passage contended:

The region around the District of Columbia is served by three major airports: Reagan National, Baltimore Washington International, and Dulles International. Reagan National is the closest to the city, it is small, it is congested, and it is in a very populated area. This bill will increase the number of flights to and from Reagan National. Further, longer distance flights will be allowed instead of requiring those flights to go through the other two airports. Local authorities oppose these changes. We believe that they are being imposed largely for the convenience of a few Members. We strongly oppose these changes, and thus oppose this bill.